

TELEGRAM

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Date: December 17, 1968

ACTION: Secstate WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO: Amembassy BRASILIA
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Declassified
Authority: 43265 By:
Brewer Thompson
Date: 05-06-2015

SAO PAULO 2723

SUBJECT: ~~Political Sitrep~~ **REACTION** São Paulo

SUMMARY: Sao Paulo state deputies and Santos union officials are disheartened over Fifth Institutional Act. Number persons in Santos including Bishop were arrested. Although Governor Sodre has promised collaboration with Federal Government, speculation that he will be removed from office continues. General fear is that extreme nationalists military are taking over country and that eventual beneficiaries will be violent leftist revolutionaries. University City occupied by troops during night.

1. Congen Labor Officer yesterday conferred with labor union leaders in Santos who disheartened but apparently not surprised by Institutional Act. Important Stevedores' Union had been assured by Port Captain that no action contemplated against them. Other

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December 17, 1968

Wright
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union leaders shrugged shoulders stating they had no leadership or power anyway. Union leaders in general do not appear particularly apprehensive.

2. Following is information we have on arrests in Santos: Friday night and Saturday a number of people were picked up and some later released. Bishop of Santos Dom Picão was called out of bed at 2:00 a.m. and questioned for some time at Army headquarters before being released. Eight persons reported still under arrest in Santos including Francisco Prado, Vice Mayor; Osvaldo Justo, Vice-Mayor-elect; João Sampaio, President of MDB Directorate; and Dante Leonelli, leftist labor lawyer. Prevailing opinion among opponents GOB is that they had better keep quiet. There is no thought of street demonstrations, strikes or active opposition. No information is available concerning the status of Mayor-elect Esmeraldo Tarquinio who currently traveling abroad but some people doubt he will be allowed assume office next April and some believe he will be arrested. It was recalled he had in past made speeches sharply critical of military.

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3. According an American professor, University City of University of São Paulo was occupied during night by Army. Students were expelled from premises (Students had been occupying dormitories illegally and held recent UNE elections there). Troops currently refusing entry to anyone, including professors, ~~who attempt enter~~ JB

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4. Although special session São Paulo state legislative assembly scheduled begin December 16 was cancelled, many state deputies appeared at Assembly to discuss current crisis. Congen officer talked with number deputies. General belief was that extreme nationalist "Nasserist" elements in military were taking over country. Moderate leftist deputies were complaining that "idiots" such as David Lerer, Helio Navaro and Moricio Alves had provoked the more stupid and refractory of the military by inflammatory speeches into drastic action and that principal eventual beneficiaries would be clandestine opposition groups.

a. MDB minority leader Chopin Tavares de Lima expressed following views: Government had entered irreversible process of repression. Military's extreme sensitivity to criticism would not

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lessen and even if attempt were made several months from now to loosen controls, surge of criticism would cause reapplication controls. Brazil was following path of Peru. United States should not assume nationalist military regime will be pro-American as anti-American current exists among extreme nationalists. He predicted increase in anti-Americanism in press because censorship would permit criticism United States whereas all attempts vent frustration over local situation will be blocked. Also predicted Brazil entering decade in which military groups will take turns ousting each other from power and that ranks of violent revolutionary left will swell due lack outlet for people participate in legitimate politics. Victors in present situation were extremists both right and left.

b. Police appeared at Assembly December 16 looking for leftist deputies Fernando Perrone and Joaquim Formiga. Both men reportedly in hiding.

5. Governor Sodre and Mayor Faria Lima both went to Rio yesterday. Governor issued statement supporting Revolution and President in "this new phase of national life." Nevertheless speculation São Paulo

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continues on Governor's future with many persons not too confident
he will last long. Justice Minister Gama e Silva reportedly
would like the job. ~~He arrived in São Paulo yesterday and~~
~~possibly is mainly responsible for occupation of University City~~
~~as illegal occupation there has long bothered him.~~

6. Congen has no information concerning arrests in Paraná or
Mato Grosso and no indication what action if any contemplated
against governors those states.

Group-4.

CORRIGAN

RZ

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